

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appl. No. 09/800,773
Attorney Docket No. Q61190

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original): An image processing method for carrying out image processing on an interimage-difference image obtained by subjecting two desired images from among two or more images taken of the same subject to interimage processing and which represents the substantial difference between said two images, wherein

a¹ said image processing carried out on said interimage-difference image is image processing by which the substantial difference between said two images represented therein is enhanced relative to artifacts arising due to misalignment of structural positions contained within said two images.

2. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 1, wherein said image processing comprises suppressing said artifacts relative to the substantial difference between said two images.

3. (currently amended): An image processing method as defined in claim 2, wherein ~~control~~ suppression of said artifacts relative to the substantial difference between said two images comprises performance of image processing based on a morphology process utilizing structural elements larger than said artifacts and smaller than said substantial difference.

4. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 1, wherein
said image processing comprises emphasizing the substantial difference between said two
images relative to the artifacts.

5. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 1, 2, or 4, wherein
said interimage processing comprises subtraction of corresponding structural positions
within said two images.

a 1 6. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 3 wherein
said interimage processing comprises subtraction of corresponding structural positions
within said two images.

7. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 1, 2, or 4, wherein
said two images are radiation images taken of the same subject at different points in time
in a time series manner.

8. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 3, wherein
said two images are radiation images taken of the same subject at different points in time
in a time series manner.

9. (original): An image processing method as defined in claim 5, wherein
said two images are radiation images taken of the same subject at different points in time
in a time series manner.

10. (original): An image processing apparatus including image processing means for
performing image processing procedures on an interimage-difference image obtained by
subjecting two desired images from among two or more images taken of the same subject to

interimage processing and which represents the substantial difference between said two images, wherein

said image processing means carries out image processing on said interimage-difference image by which the substantial difference between said two images represented therein is enhanced relative to artifacts arising due to misalignment of structural positions contained within said two images.

a¹ 11. (currently amended): An image processing apparatus as defined in claim 10, wherein said image processing procedure comprises ~~controlling-suppressing~~ said artifacts relative to the substantial difference between said two images.

12. (currently amended): An image processing apparatus as defined in claim 11, wherein said image processing procedure comprises ~~controlling-suppressing~~ said artifacts relative to the substantial difference between said two images by applying image processing based on a morphology process utilizing structural elements larger than said artifacts and smaller than said substantial difference.

13. (original): An image processing apparatus as defined in claim 10, wherein said image processing procedure comprises emphasizing the substantial difference between said two images relative to the artifacts.

14. (original): An image processing apparatus as defined in claim 10, 11, 12, or 13 wherein

said interimage processing procedure comprises subtraction of corresponding structural positions within said two images.

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15. (original): An image processing apparatus as defined in claim 10, 11, 12, or 13,
wherein

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said two images are radiation images taken of the same subject at different points in time
in a time series manner.

16. (original): An image processing apparatus as defined in claim 14, wherein
said two images are radiation images taken of the same subject at different points in time
in a time series manner.
